

I am Calista Heggem of Laurel, Montana. My husband and I are here today in support of House Bill 68 . On Jan. 31st 2003 my life changed forever. My son, Dane Heggem, died at his daycare on that day. We had just celebrated his first birthday one week prior, and videotaped him taking his first steps. We were shocked and stunned by his sudden death. He was a happy, healthy one year old boy. I kept asking myself "what happened". After a routine autopsy it was found that he had a toxic dose of diphenhydramine, or Benadryl, in his system. We were investigated as was his daycare. I was in a state of shock and assumed the Benadryl had been given by the emergency personnel in an attempt to revive him. The thought that it could have come from the daycare was not even a possibility. Unfortunately, it is apparent now, after a thorough investigation, that Dane's daycare had been drugging the children with Benadryl to get them to take naps.

We were stunned and shocked by his death alone, and now we have had to deal with the fact that he was killed by the people that we entrusted to care for him. I always thought of myself as a careful person and would not trust just anybody to care for my children. I visited the daycare that was recommended to me by a co-worker who took her daughter there. They were local women who were mother's themselves and kept a tidy and clean daycare which was state licensed. It has been a shocking revelation for us as I know it has been for other people as well, especially those that are parents with children in daycare.

It will be two years at the end of this month since Dane died. The person responsible for Dane's death has yet to receive any punishment. A trial is scheduled for June of this year.

I would hope that this law would help to prosecute a case like this in the future and to serve as a deterrent for others. Since Dane's death I have heard rumors of ~~this occurring~~ *other daycares*

that have sedated children

~~at other daycares~~ in the state. We have also been in touch with families from across the

United States whose children have died due to drugging at daycares. I hope that ~~no~~
no other family will ever have to endure this tragedy. My family will never be the same. It breaks my heart to know that Dane should still be

with us. Our older son, Conner, who was 5 yrs old when Dane died has experienced a
terrible loss. Our daughter, Gabrielle, who is 9 mo. old will never

I would hope that you feel as I do... that our children are precious to our society. We should have laws in place to prosecute people who harm our most precious children. know her
older
brother.